

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAM-01 SAJ-01 CU-02 AID-05 IO-10 NIC-01

SCCT-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 DPW-01 SY-04 A-01 OPR-01 SCS-03 SCA-01

CCO-00 OC-05 OMB-01 USSS-00 /086 W
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P R 261125Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9517

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

C O N F I D E N T I A L PHNOM PENH 3514

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, PINS, CB

SUBJECT: ANTI-CHINESE STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS IN PHNOM PENH

REF: KHMER REPORT, FEBRUARY 25, 1975

1. ANTI-CHINESE DEMONSTRATIONS IN BATTAMBANG (SEE REFTEL) HAVE NOW SPREAD TO PHNOM PENH. DURING THE MORNING OF FEBRUARY 26 AT LEAST 100 HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS DESCENDED ON A PHNOM PENH MARKET AREA, BROKE WINDOWS OF CHINESE-OWNED SHOPS, ENTERED AND SERIOUSLY DAMAGED A SMALL CHINESE SOUP KITCHEN, AND HARASSED SEVERAL CHINESE STREET VENDORS. THEY WERE DISPERSED BY GRENDAIRES FIRING IN THE AIR. A SECOND GROUP MARCHED TOWARD ANOTHER MARKET, WERE STOPPED BY POLICE BEFORE ARRIVAL BUT AGAIN BROKE WINDORS OF CHINESE-OWNED STORES ENROUTE. TO THE BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE THUS FAR, NO ONE HAS BEEN SERIOUSLY HURT OR ARRESTED. CHINESE OWNED ESTABLISHMENTS WHICH COMPRISE MUCH OF PHNOM PENH'S COMMERCIAL AND MARKET FACILITIES, ARE CLOSED DOWN ALMOST COMPLETELY.

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2. COMMENT: AS INDICATED REFTEL, A RESERVOIR OF ANTI-

CHINESE SENTIMENT ALREADY EXISTS WHICH HAS BEEN EXACERBATED BY THE WORSENING ECONOMIC CONDITIONS. IN ADDITION, THERE HAVE BEEN INFLAMMATORY PRESS ARTICLES PRINTING LETTERS ALLEGEDLY FROM CHINESE WHICH HAVE SLANDERED KHMER. THESE ARTICLES HAVE FURTHER INFLAMED FEELINGS. THE NEWSPAPER ARTICLES STRIKE US AS DELIBERATE FABRICATIONS DESIGNED TO FAN ANTI-CHINESE FEELING AND THE STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS MAY ALSO BE THE RESULT OF SOME OUTSIDE INFLUENCE, ALTHOUGH WE HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO LOCATE THE SOURCE. THERE IS NO EVIDENCE AS YET THAT DEMONSTRATIONS ARE KC-ORCHESTRATED.

3. IN ANY CASE, THE DEMONSTRATIONS ARE OCCURRING AT THE WORST POSSIBLE TIME, AND MORE SUCH INCIDENTS IN PHNOM PENH AND ELSEWHERE ARE QUITE POSSIBLE. WE ARE FOLLOWING THE SITUATION CLOSELY.
DEAN

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NNN

Message Attributes

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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